

Why you need this policy:

There are lots of legitimate reasons to want to terminate a patient. In the best case scenario, termination makes sense when the patient is “cured” and no longer needs to see the doctor. More often than not, termination is necessitated by less favorable changes in medical conditions and often for aspects of the relationship having nothing to do with treatment—like a patient’s violence, theft and other inappropriate behavior. Unfortunately, as a matter of law and ethics, terminating a patient isn’t a simple matter.

How this policy helps you:

This Model outlines the provisions to include in a patient termination policy.

How to use this policy:

Give all new patients a copy of this Policy as part of their orientation package.

XYZ Medical Group Patient Termination

1. Statement of policy

To provide the best quality medical care and a pleasant patient experience, all patients are expected to carry out their responsibilities under the XYZ Medical Group Patients’ Rights and Responsibilities Policy. XYZ reserves the right to terminate any patient who fails to meet these responsibilities.

2. Purpose of policy

XYZ Medical Group regards the termination of a patient as a last resort to be used only after attempts to resolve problems prove unsuccessful. The purpose of this Policy is to explain the grounds and procedures for termination. Our

hope and expectation is that by making patients aware of the termination process, XYZ Medical Group will never have to actually resort to it.

3. Grounds for termination

- 1) Termination for misconduct:** XYZ Medical Group may terminate patients for behavior that it believes permanently and irreversibly damages the physician-patient relationship and the respect and on which it rests, including a patient's:
 - a) Persistent refusal to follow prescribed treatment protocols and procedures;
 - b) Tampering, altering, improper or illegal use of prescriptions or medications;
 - c) Lying, furnishing false information, or misrepresenting the truth;
 - d) Acting in violent, harassing or abusive way to XYZ Medical Group physicians, staff, patients, or visitors;
 - e) Theft of any XYZ Medical Group property;
 - f) Persistent failure to pay bills and honor financial obligations under the XYZ Medical Group Financial Policy;
 - g) Persistent failure to keep appointments and honor the terms of the XYZ Medical Group Patient Scheduling and Appointments Policy; and
 - h) Engaging in any other misbehavior that XYZ Medical Group, in its sole discretion, considers permanently damaging to the physician-patient relationship.
- 2) Termination for medical reasons:** XYZ Medical Group may also terminate patients for medical reasons to the extent it determines that continuing to treat the patient is no longer necessary or beneficial to the patient's health and termination of treatment is in the patient's best interest.

4. Termination procedure

- 1) Immediate termination:** XYZ Medical Group reserves the right to immediately terminate patients who commit offenses that it deems to intolerable. For example, patients can be terminated for engaging in acts of physical violence even if it is a first offense.

2) Progressive discipline: For less serious offenses, XYZ Medical Group will seek to use a system of progressive discipline that gives patients an opportunity to correct their offenses and terminated only when such attempts to fix the problem prove ineffective. Where possible, XYZ will use the following progressive discipline procedure:

- a) Patients will receive a verbal warning after they commit a first offense that notifies them of what they did wrong and alerts them that they face additional discipline for further offenses;
- b) Patients who commit further offenses will receive a written warning and may be asked to enter into a written probationary agreement requiring them to meet certain conditions to continue to receive care from XYZ Medical Group;
- c) Patients who violate the terms of their probationary agreement may then be terminated.

3) Termination letter: XYZ Medical Group will send any patient terminated in accordance with this Policy a letter listing:

- a) A statement of the reason(s) for termination;
- b) The date on which the termination takes effect; and
- c) A statement for the patient to sign authorizing XYZ Medical Group to send his/her medical record to the new physician; and
- d) A process the patient can use to appeal or comment on the termination.

5. Termination must not harm patient's health

XYZ Medical Group will not terminate any patient, regardless of offenses committed, if it determines that terminating the treatment they receive from XYZ will endanger their health and that the patient can't receive equally effective treatment from a medical provider. Where possible, XYZ Medical Group will give terminated patients a grace period of up to 30 days to find a new physician and make appropriate treatment arrangements before the termination takes effect.

